

The Global Migration of a Chinese Family¹⁾

— Kwan Yuen-cheung and His Descendants —

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ある中国人家族のグローバル移動

— 関元昌一族の事例 —

容 應 莢

要旨

関元昌（1832-1912）を祖とする一族は広東省番禺県から香港に移住したキリスト者家族であったが、清末・民国期には仕事に就くため、日中戦争期には日本占領区から逃れるため、国共内戦、大躍進、文化大革命などの動乱期には安定した生活を求めて、国内や、香港や台湾、東南アジア、北米へ転々と移動した。香港返還が決まった後も一旦定住した香港から海外に渡り、こうして一族がディアスポラ化していく離散家族の様相を呈したが、1980年代からはグローバリゼーションの進展とともに、精神的にも物理的にも一族の結束を取り戻しながら、むしろより強固な絆で結ばれた「グローバル家族」となった。本論文はそのグローバル・マイグレーションの過程を追跡し、解明することを目的とするものである。

Right after the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in March of 2011, and the resulted leak of radioactive material came to be known, the author of this paper received, one after another, offers from relatives around the world to stay in their houses in order to escape from Japan. These offers came from her siblings living in Hong Kong and Malay-

sia, from first, second, and even distant cousins living in Singapore, North America, Hawaii and England. A cousin who lived in Hawaii and worked for a travel agency, told the author that she could use her free air ticket to deliver whatever needed for daily life to Narita, upon hearing of the shortage of food and petrol in Tokyo. Cousins who lent their help included some whom the author had met only once or twice. For the very first time, the author realized how grateful and meaningful it was to be a member of a global family.

This paper will deal with a case study on the formation and development of the author's global family, to examine when, how and why the descendants of Kwan Yuen-cheung²⁾ (關元昌, Guan Yuanchang) and his wife Lai Amui (黎阿妹, Li Amei) migrated to different parts of the world, and how this diaspora family reunited and became a global family.

I. Who are the Kwan family?³⁾

Kwan Yuen-cheung (1832-1912) and his wife Lai Amui (1840-1902) were among the earliest Christians in Hong Kong and Guangdong. Yuen-cheung was born at Xilang Village (西望鄉) in Panyu County (番禺縣) of Guangdong Province. His father, Kwan Yat (關日, Guan Ri), was probably one of the earliest disciples of Robert Morrison who was sent by the London Missionary Society (LMS) to spread Christianity in China. It is not clear when and how Kwan Yat converted to Christianity. Judging from the fact that he and his family moved to Hong Kong after the Opium War owing to discrimination by fellow-villagers for being converts, it may be assumed that he had become a Christian in the 1830s.

Kwan Yat's family was originally low in socio-economic status, so they lacked the traditional ladders to achieve social success. However, their relations with the LMS had a lasting influence on both their religious and secular lives. Kwan Yat had four sons, all of whom became elders of the LMS station in Hong Kong. His youngest son, Kwan Jit-tong (關節堂, Guan Jietang: 1835-1901), studied at the Anglo-Chinese College that was originally founded in Malacca by Morrison and Milne in 1818 and later moved by James Legge to Hong Kong in 1843. Legge was sent in 1839 by

the LMS to Malacca where he was assigned to work for the College and became its principal in November 1840. After Jit-tong graduated from the College, he taught for more than 30 years at the Central School established by James Legge upon the request of the Hong Kong government. Many of his classmates opted for better-paid jobs such as translators or compradors.

Yuen-cheung started working as a general assistant in printing for the LMS, and was eventually trained by a missionary, who was also a medical doctor, in the western method of dentistry. He became one of China's first western dentists. He was also a leading figure in founding the To Tsai Church (道濟會堂; Daoji Huitang), the first independent church of Chinese converts in Hong Kong, under the support of the LMS.

Lai Amui, on the other hand, got separated from her parents during the turmoil caused by a local rebellion and was brought up by a British officer, probably the then Registrar General, and his Chinese wife. Amui was able to receive a good education under the couple who adopted her. Because of her upbringing, she was fluent in English and became a Christian. Unlike her Chinese contemporaries, she did not confine herself in her family, but became a career woman, worked as a teacher, an interpreter, and a matron at Alice Memorial Hospital in Hong Kong. She also engaged in volunteer activities.

Yuen-cheung practiced dentistry in Guangzhou, but his home was in Hong Kong. Both he and Amui were fervent and active members of the To Tsai Church in Hong Kong. Amui's professional career was located in Hong Kong. The fact that both of them were buried in the Hong Kong Cemetery showed that Hong Kong was their home.

Yuen-cheung and Amui had ten sons and five daughters. Most of them achieved fame and success in China and Hong Kong and their descendants can now be found all over the world. How did it happen? Yuen-cheung and Amui paid much attention to their children's education. The sons studied Chinese and English in secondary school and entered college for advanced studies. The daughters had to enter private schools to study as there was no public girls' school established yet. Because of their mother's unique experience of having been raised in an English family, it can be assumed that

the daughters were also able to acquire some knowledge of English. Moreover, the children of Yuen-cheung grew up in a time when the Qing government finally recognized the superiority of western gunboats – in other words, western technology. People equipped with knowledge of western affairs were especially needed in the navy, the tax and maritime customs service, medical service, and mining. These were the fields where the children of Yuen-cheung built their careers. As a result, all of the sons were engaged in jobs related to so-called “western affairs”, such as medical doctors, naval officers, customs officers and engineers, and the daughters obtained qualifications to become teachers and western-style midwives. Brief facts of the fifteen children are listed below.

1. Yuet-ming (月明, Yueming: 1858-1913) was the eldest daughter. Nothing much is known about her except for her enthusiastic services at church. She settled and lived in Hong Kong.

2. King-wan (景雲, Jingyun: 1860-1923), the second son, was a graduate of the Nanyang Naval Academy. He served in the Fujian Fleet for some years and later at several posts in the Customs office, then worked as a manager in the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company. He settled in the outskirt of the city of Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. King-wan married Lam Yim-king (林艷瓊, Lin Yanqiong: 1865-1924) and had two sons and eight daughters.

3. King-to (景道, Jingdao: 1862-1889), the third son, was also a naval officer at the Fujian Fleet and later became a smuggling prevention officer at the Customs service. He died unmarried at the age of 27.

4. King-woon (景垣, Jingyuan: 1864), the fourth son, died at the age of 1.

5. Yuet-ping (月屏, Yueping: 1865-1899) was the fifth daughter. She was a student of Noyes at True Light Girls' School in Guangzhou, a fervent and active Christian of the Zhenjiang Church. She also translated and wrote many missionary tracts. She was married to Won Bing-chung (溫秉忠, Wen Bingzhong: 1863-1938) and they had one son who died young, and an adopted daughter. Yuet-ping died at the age of 34, and was buried in Hong Kong.

6. King-yin (景賢, Jingxian: 1867-1919), the sixth son, was a graduate of the Imperial Medical College in Tianjin in 1890. His appointments included chief of a naval hospital, and physician-in-attendance for the Empress Dowager. He married Cheung Yuk-yue (張玉如, Zhang Yuru: 1870-1945) and they had five sons and seven daughters. King-yin was buried in Tianjin.

7. King-leung (景良, Jingliang: 1869-1945), the seventh son, graduated in medicine from the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese in 1893. He served as a physician in Hong Kong. Sun Yat-sen was a class-mate when they studied medicine and became a close friend. Sun was the match-maker for King-leung and Emma Lee (李月娥, Li Yue-e: 1876-1905). The couple had five sons and two daughters. After Emma died at the age of 30, King-leung married Kong Yan-mui (江恩梅, Jiang Enmei: 1885-1965), a mid-wife at the Alice Memorial Hospital and had seven sons and two daughters. He and his two wives were buried in Hong Kong.

8. Yuet-ying (月英, Yueying: 1870-1962), the eighth daughter, was a teacher of English and other subjects, and one of the earliest registered midwives among Hong Kong Chinese. She married Yung Hoy (容星橋, Rong Xingqiao: 1865-1933) and they had eight sons and three daughters. After Yung's death in Shanghai, Yuet-ying lived in Singapore and Hong Kong with her children. She was such a fervent volunteer that she still worked at a rehabilitation institution in her eighties.

9. King-chung (景忠, Jingzhong: 1873-1923), the ninth son, joined the Imperial Customs Services after graduating from Queen's College in Hong Kong, and served at various ports. He married Sarah Chu Chi-sian (朱岐仙, Zhu Qixian: 1873-1940) and had two sons and three daughters. They retired in Shanghai and were buried there.

10. Yuet-har (月霞, Yuexia: 1874-1942), the tenth daughter, engaged her whole life in missionary activities and remained unmarried. She was buried in Hong Kong.

11. Yuet-wah (月華, Yuehua: 1875-?) , the eleventh daughter, was a qualified midwife in Hong Kong. She married Tam Kwing-chung (譚炯松, Tan Jionsong: 1875-1902) who passed away at the age of 27. They had

one son.

12. King-sing (景星, Jingxing: 1877-1955), the twelfth son, was a graduate of the Imperial Medical College in Tianjin in 1900 and was appointed as Director of the Public Health Office at Yingkou, Tianjin. In the early days of the Republican government he was appointed Inspector-General for Salt Control in Guangdong. He married Yeung Shun-wah (楊舜華, Yang Shunhua: 1884-1951), had six daughters and two sons and retired in Hong Kong.

13. King-sun (景燊, Jingshen: 1878-1948), the thirteenth son, graduated in mineralogy in Peking and went on for graduate studies in England and America. He worked for Loke Yew, a famous tin miner in Malaya, and married one of his daughters, Juliann Yuen-ying, and had one son. He later returned and settled in Hong Kong.

14. King-hung (景鏗, Jingkeng: 1880-1947), the fourteenth son, graduated from the Imperial Medical College in Tianjin and went on to further studies in Hong Kong. He was appointed Branch Director of Hong Kong Hospital and Medical Director of the Kailuan Mining Department, and later worked at various railway offices. He went into private medical practice and settled in Tianjin. He married Chen Lusheng (陳律生: 1885-1968) and Jia Peilan (賈佩蘭: 1908-1964), and had three sons and six daughters.

15. King-fai (景輝, Jinghui: 1883-1943), the fifteenth son, graduated from Diocesan College in Hong Kong and went on to higher studies in Europe and America. He obtained a degree in Civil Engineering in the United States, and was Director of the Department of Highways in Swatow and later a commissioner in the Canton Municipal Government. He remained single throughout his life.

The acquisition of western knowledge through relations with western missionaries and the Christian community provided a new ladder for upward social mobility, and created a new class of elite – English-speaking Chinese in the British Colony of Hong Kong. Yuen-cheung and his family were no doubt members of this new elite group. During the lives of the second generation, Yuen-cheung's family had already spread from Hong

Kong to treaty ports such as Suzhou, Zhenjiang, Shanghai and Tianjin, and also to Beijing and Malaya due to the professions they engaged in.

The second generation continued to bring up their own children in western-style education. Many of the third generation had the opportunity to study abroad. In spite of the fact that China was never able to break out from turmoil in the first half of the 20th century, those who studied abroad opted to return to China, to take up jobs that would help strengthen China in the face of western threat, as expressed in the maxim Yuen-cheung gave his family, “May my descendants continue to be devoted Christians, and live their lives with Christian spirit to aid the poor in the community and as medical doctors to save lives or as engineers to help make the country strong”. However, the Communist takeover in China in 1949 marked a turning point. The third and the later generations migrated and dispersed to different regions overseas.

In order to facilitate the description of the migration pattern, “The Kwan Family Code System” created in 2003⁴⁾ will be used in this paper as an aid for identification. It is a system of numerical codes that denote an individual’s position within the extended family. Numbers indicate birth order of the lineage, separated into generations in descending order. The first set of numbers refers to Kwan Yuen-cheung’s own children, the next his grandchildren, and so on. Therefore Yuen-cheung’s offspring will have a single-digit family code, his/her child will have a two-digit code, and so on. For example, the author’s code, 8-9-3, means that her grandmother was Yuen-cheung’s 8th daughter, her father was the 9th child of her grandmother, and she is the third child of her father. Spouses are treated as integral members of the Kwan family, and therefore a suffix “S” was added to the code to signify spouse, “P” to signify domestic partner, and “R” to signify relative. The family code system was first introduced for identification purpose in the “Kwan Yuen-cheung Family Record” compiled in 2003.

The 15 children of Yuen-cheung are regarded as ancestors of the 15 branches of the present Kwan family. The first, third, fourth, tenth, and fifteenth branches had no issues. The fifth daughter had a son who died early and had no issue, but had an adopted daughter, whose relation with the

Kwan family was only re-established a few years ago, a fact probably still unknown to most of her descendants.⁵⁾ Today there are a total of 1310 members listed in the Family Record,⁶⁾ living and non-living, including direct descendants, adopted children and their spouses or partners. Kwan family members can be found in Australia, Canada, England, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States, besides mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Information regarding some of the famous in-laws of the Kwan family will be supplemented here.⁷⁾ Yuet-ping (5) was married to Won Bing-chung who was a member of the second detachment of the Chinese Educational Mission (CEM) to the United States, and the son of a famous church elder. After Yuet-ping passed away, Won married the sister of Ni Kwei-tseng who was the mother of the three Soong sisters. Yuet-ying (8) married Yung Hoy who was a cousin of Yung Wing and a member of the third detachment of the CEM to the United States. Yung Hoy made the acquaintance of Sun Yat-sen through his marriage with Yuet-ying and introduced Sun to Yung Wing after the abortive Zilijun Uprising in Hankou. King-sing (12) married Yeung Shun-wah, the daughter of a wealthy merchant and a loyal supporter of Sun Yat-sen, and the sister of Yang Heling who was a comrade of Sun in his Hong Kong days. King-sun (13) married Juliann, the daughter of Loke Yew who was a famous and wealthy tin miner in Malaya. Among the third generation, Patricia Kwan (6-12) married Theodore Cheng, the son of Cheng Tian-gu who was the mayor of Canton and the ambassador to Mexico and Brazil in the 1940s. Violet Kwan (7-5) married Sandy Lin, the son of Lin Yuen-fai who was a member of the fourth detachment of the CEM, and became the first Chinese director of a western-style medical school, namely, the Imperial Medical College, Tientsin. Gloria Kwan (7-2-3) of the fourth generation married Ling Sung-ching, the son of Homer Ling Chuen-Cheng, an architect who designed the Ling House on Gulangyu Island, Xiamen. Kenneth Yung (8-4-2) married Esther Sun, the grand-daughter of Sun Mei who was the elder brother of Sun Yat-sen. Last but not the least, George Hu (9-1-4) married Tan Poey Ching, the grand-daughter of Tan Kah Kee, a Chinese

businessman, community leader and philanthropist in Malaya.

II. The dispersion⁸⁾

Chinese diaspora in the 19th century are in general classified into 3 groups: “coolies”, free artisans, and traders. Coolies worked in mines and plantations, and built railways. Artisans included tailors, blacksmiths, ship chandlers, cobblers and carpenters. Traders transferred goods such as silk, tools, textiles, food, and porcelain. Their lives in foreign lands met with countless exploitation, discrimination and hostility. They were marginal groups who were looked down on by both Chinese in the mainland and foreigners in the lands where they worked.

The majority of the Kwan family members who voluntarily migrated from China, however, were able to find respectable jobs and lead well-to-do lives on foreign soils, due to their educational background and their adaptability to foreign environments. There were 4 routes for their voluntary migration.

- (i) To stay on after finishing education in a foreign country
- (ii) To migrate taking advantage of professional skills
- (iii) To obtain citizenship through marriage to a citizen
- (iv) To gain citizenship as immediate family of a relative who has already become citizen

1. Migration to Southeast Asia and Taiwan

The settling of Kwan family members in Malaya began at the turn of the 20th century. King-sun (13, the 13th son of Yuen-cheung) worked for Loke Yew in Malaya and married his daughter. He himself chose to return to live in Hong Kong but he had brought his nephew, Kwan Kin-tong (7-2), and Cheng Yoon-tin (7-3S) who was the husband of his niece, Wai-heng (7-3), to Kuala Lumpur. Kin-tong and Yoon-tin worked at the Kwong Yik (Selangor) Banking Corporation, the founding of which Loke Yew played a leading role. Kin-tong got married in Kuala Lumpur, settled and raised a big family there. Wai-heng (7-3), on the other hand, took her children and some of Kin-tong’s children back to study in Hong Kong and mainland China. These children stayed with their Kwan relatives and were well tak-

en care of.

Margaret Kwan (9-1) married Hu Tsai-kuen, a medical student who came from Singapore to study medicine at the University of Hong Kong in 1916, and migrated to Singapore. They had a family of 7 children, and became the earliest branch who settled in Singapore. Her brother Pah-Chien (9-2) visited her in Singapore and met her neighbor Egan Oh whom he married. Pah-Chien and Egan Oh (9-2S) lived in Shanghai, but decided to move back to Singapore with his mother (9S) when Japan invaded China. They settled in Singapore thereafter. Trikki Cheng (7-3-3) who is Wai-heng's daughter, was brought up in Hong Kong and studied in Shanghai and Guizhou. She went to the States for undergraduate studies where she met her future husband Quek Kai-tiong who was from Singapore. Their family settled in Singapore.

Winston Wing Yung (8-8) was the Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health of the Nationalist government in Nanking. When he was in Geneva attending the World Health Assembly as the Deputy Chief of the Chinese Delegation in 1948, news arrived that the fall of China to the Communists would be inevitable. Immediately, he and his wife Lilyan Leong (8-8S) decided that he would resign from his government post and the family would leave China. Winston was able to get an appointment at the WHO Epidemiological Intelligence Station in Singapore so the whole family were able to move and settle there. Edmond H Yung (8-9-2), a civil engineer, and his wife Emily were graduates of Hong Kong University. They worked in England for some years, and moved to Malaysia in the 1970s where Edmond went into the business of property development and Emily into interior design. Both were conferred separately a "Datuk-ship" later.

Kwan family branches were also found in Thailand and Japan. May Kwan (9-2-2) was brought up in Singapore, and went to study at the University of Adelaide in South Australia around 1960. She met a Thai student, Suphawatt Phanchet, whom she married in 1965 and moved to Bangkok with him in 1966. The author (8-9-3) was born in China, brought up in Hong Kong, studied in Japan and the United States, married in Singa-

pore, stayed there for seven years, and the whole family migrated to Japan in 1989.

Kwan Sung Sing (6-1), the eminent architect of Kwan, Chu and Yang Architects in Tianjin, was said to be a close friend of Chiang Kai-shek and his wife, Soong May-ling. He followed the Nationalist government to Taiwan and lived there until his death in 1960. His children, however, went to study in North America and stayed on.

2. Migration to North America

The communist takeover in China in 1949 marked a critical point in Kwan family migration to North America. Before then, the Kwans who finished studies at the tertiary level in the US returned to China upon their graduation. However, after 1949, those who were already in the United States chose to stay on, and others who were in China opted to go there to find new lives.

Four major developments in China and the United States facilitated the immigration of the Kwan members to the United States. After the U.S. Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act to halt Chinese immigration in 1882, Chinese were excluded from citizenship by naturalization. During the Sino-Japanese War, when China allied with the U.S., the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed, and a quota of 105 per year was set for Chinese immigrants in 1943. Yung Chi-hung (8-6), who came to the States for tertiary education in the 1920s, finally obtained his citizenship at this time.

Secondly, the Congress passed the Displaced Persons Act to give permanent resident status to 3,500 Chinese visitors, seamen, and students unable to return home because of civil war in China in 1948. U.S. broke off diplomatic ties with the newly established People's Republic of China in 1949. In 1952 the McCarran-Walter Act made Chinese immigrants, many who had lived in the U.S. for decades, eligible for citizenship. In 1953 the Refugee Relief Act allowed 3,000 Chinese into U.S. as refugees of the Chinese civil war.

The migration of Jeanne Fong (6-3-2) and her family is characteristic of the development of this period. Jeanne's father, Kwan Sung-Tao (6-3) undertook graduate studies in the U.S. where he met Florence, a Chinese

American born in the U.S. But Florence lost her American citizenship when she married Sung-Tao, and returned to live in China with him upon graduation, only to regain it in 1943. They and their three children were able to go on board the last evacuating ship to leave Shanghai for the U.S. on January 1949, due to Florence being an American citizen. On the other hand, Jeanne's husband Mike came to study in the U.S. in 1948, and was allowed to acquire U.S. citizenship under the Refugee Relief Act in 1953.

The next development that facilitated the migration of the Kwans to the U.S. was President John Kennedy's directive in 1962, which permitted refugees from mainland China to enter the U.S. as parolees from Hong Kong. 15,000 refugees entered the U.S. under this provision, among who were David Kwan (2-2-1), his wife Ruth (2-2-1S), and their six children who left Hong Kong for the U.S. in 1963. Finally came the reopening of China to the outside world at the end of 1978. Vivian (6-6-2) and her family of four, David Chen (6-10-1) and his wife and two children arrived in the U.S. In both cases, one person migrated to the United States as a close relative of a Kwan member who had already acquired U.S. citizenship, and then their own immediate family members would arrive a few years later.

In the case of the Kwans in Hong Kong, the 10-year Cultural Revolution in China from 1966 created political anxiety there. Many of them who had already settled in Hong Kong since the 1950s decided to leave Hong Kong. Yung Ying-ming (8-5-1)'s family, Cheng Man-chee (7-3-4)'s family, and Kwan Shiu-kuan (12-5)'s family migrated to the States in this period.

Similar to the U.S., Canada also had a racial immigration policy that restricted entry for certain groups deemed "less desirable". The original Chinese Act of 1885 restricted Chinese immigration with a head tax, further strengthened by the Chinese Act of 1923 which existed until 1946. The 1960s, however, saw several key reforms to Canada's immigration policy. In 1962, the government introduced regulations that virtually eliminated racial discrimination as a major feature of immigration policy. Kenneth Yung (8-4-2), who had finished his Master of Engineering program in Adelaide, and had two-year working experience in Tasmania, chose to migrate to British Columbia in Canada in the same year. Then, the Immigra-

tion Act regulations were amended in 1967, under which a point system was introduced and education replaced race as a major selection criterion. The de-racialization in Canada's immigration policy had an effect on the migration of highly educated individuals.

Many Kwan members had migrated to Canada from Hong Kong since the Cultural Revolution, and even more followed after the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, that People's Republic of China would resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong on 1 July 1997, was formally signed. Paul Cheng (7-3-1), Yung Ying-wah (8-4-3), Jeannie Yee (8-11-1) were among those who brought their family there.

3. Migration to Oceania

The Australian government introduced the Migration Act in 1966, which effectively dismantled the White Australia Policy installed since 1901, and increased access to non-European migrants. When the Policy was still in force in the 1960s, Allen Yung (8-8-2), who went to study in Australia in 1952 and finished his program in the Medical School at Melbourne University in 1960, was able to gain permanent residency only on the basis of being married to an Australian. He became an Australian citizen several years later. The 1975 Racial Discrimination Act made the use of racial criteria illegal for any official purpose. Then all selection of prospective migrants based on country of origin was entirely removed from official policy in 1978. Katherine Bau (2-10-2) from Hong Kong met Wong Lock-seng from Malaysia during her study in Australia. They got married and lived in Kuala Lumpur for 10 years, but moved back to Australia after deliberation regarding living and education environments for their son. In view of the imminent return of Hong Kong to mainland China, Michael Kwan (7-6-4), who went to Australia for college education, stayed on, and his siblings Grace (7-6-1), Alice (7-6-3) and Granger (7-6-5) followed suit to New Zealand. After the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, students from mainland China were allowed to settle in Australia permanently. Rong Chengzhao (8-1-1-1) and Rong Chengkun (8-1-2-1) who came to study from Shanghai, decided to stay.

One earlier migration of the Kwan family to New Zealand was Ivy

Kwan (7-10). She met Harry Long, the son of a Chinese laborer in New Zealand, who had come to work in Hong Kong. They got married and lived in Hong Kong, then returned to New Zealand after Harry's retirement. Their daughter, Judy Chan (7-10-1) went to study in New Zealand while the parents were still in Hong Kong, and decided to stay on.

In short, the impetus for the Kwans to migrate was mainly generated by the political chaos and social turmoil in China they experienced, especially during the Communist takeover. Their elite status signified their close relations with the Nationalist government, and their devotion to Christianity made them incompatible with the Communists. Those who were already overseas chose to stay on, and those who were in China made efforts to leave.

In the 1950s and 1960s the Kwan family unity declined as many members migrated overseas to find new lives. Those who stayed in Hong Kong still remained close, but those overseas gradually drifted apart from the Hong Kong and China Kwans as they had to adjust to their new social environments. Those in their 50s and 60s had to cope with economic survival and paying college tuition fees for their children. Those in their 30s and 40s were working to provide for basic needs, and were busy raising young children. Those in their 20s were studying and trying hard to blend into the local peer groups. Therefore, it was not easy to maintain contact with the Kwans in other parts of the world. As for younger members who were brought up in North America, they were neither aware of the family history nor had mastery of the Chinese language, and thus had even less ties with their Asian relatives.

III. The Reunion

The situation changed when the jumbo jet in the late 1970s made international travel much cheaper, easier and faster. Migration to a foreign country used to mean settling down permanently; so visiting the hometown was a rare event. Now, people can come and go as they pleased, some a few times yearly. Import of Chinese video, music, tapes, books and food

enabled the overseas Chinese to maintain their Chinese life styles in foreign lands. Many Chinese communities in large cities had their own newspapers, magazines and even TV stations. Communication, such as international telephone calls, also became cheaply accessible. With the arrival of the Internet, overseas Chinese, be they friends, relatives, or strangers, are linked by a new kind of communication network. Before the Internet, contacts with relatives were in general restricted to the immediate family, members of the same branch, and other branches who lived close by. Letters, cards, and the telephone were the usual means. After the arrival of e-mail, frequent and easy contacts through this new medium can be made not only to old acquaintances but also to those known only by name but not in person. Instead of sending many letters, which was tedious and expensive, a single e-mail serves the same purpose. This technological revolution created a new and easy communication network for the Kwans to renew relationships, to fill in gaps that were caused by loss of contact, and to build up new solidarity among them.

1. The compilation of "Kwan Yuen-cheung Family Record"

The idea of compiling a genealogy record for the Kwan Yuen-Cheung Family was first brought up in Tianjin back in 1917, when Kwan King-sun (13) came from Hong Kong to visit his brother King-yin (6). Both agreed that since the family had expanded to more than a hundred in number, all living in different parts of China, and even Malaya, a family record book would be needed to keep everyone in touch, and to know who was who in the family and how they were related to one another. It was a tedious and difficult task to collect information of all members that the first edition of the Kwan Yuen-Cheong Family Record finally came out many years later in 1937.⁹⁾

However, with increasing emigration of the subsequent generations of all the branches, the Kwan Family became even more dispersed. The majority chose to settle in North America, Australia and different parts of Asia, with only a small number remaining in China itself. For the benefit of many younger Kwan descendants who would not understand Chinese, Peter Kwan (7-2-1) in Malaysia had begun to translate and update the

1937 Edition of the Family Record into English. Unfortunately he could not finish his task owing to deterioration of his health, and the half-finished edition in English was printed privately and distributed by him in 1982.¹⁰⁾

On the other hand, Yung Chi-tung (8-9) in Hong Kong had completed in 1982 his compilation of a family record of the eighth branch as “The Yung Family Record”, which departed from Chinese tradition by including daughters and their families.¹¹⁾ Then, Richard Yung (8-8-1) in Singapore updated and revised the 1982 edition to a bi-lingual edition in 1999.¹²⁾ Kwan Shiu-shek (12-7) in Hong Kong, together with the author of this paper, collected written materials and photographs and published a book on the history of the Kwan family.¹³⁾ He also repaired the ancestral hall in their hometown and set up a charity clinic there in commemoration of the many medical doctors since Kwan Yuen-cheung in the family, soon after China inaugurated the policies of economic reforms. Meanwhile, Richard Yung (8-8-1) and some other members went on to continue Peter Kwan’s efforts and finished the 2003 edition of the Kwan Yuen-cheung Family Record which included all the 15 branches of Yuen-cheung family and also the 4th branch of Kwan Jit-tong (Yuen-cheung’s younger brother)’s family. The Kwan Family Codes were introduced, and Jit-tong’s descendants were referred to as the “D” branch.¹⁴⁾

The 2003 Family Record differs from the traditional Chinese genealogy records in four ways: (1) both Chinese and English names are included; (2) both descendants of sons and daughters are included; (3) both direct descendants and adopted children are included; (4) non-marital partnership and different sexual orientation such as same-sex marriage. non-marital partnership and different sexual orientation such as same-sex marriage are recognized.

Richard Yung passed away in 2007, and the task of keeping the Family Record up-to-date fell on the author. As of April 2015, there are 1311 names on the family member list.

2. Reunions

The popularity in finding the roots of one’s family in North America en-

couraged the English-speaking Kwans to learn about their family history. When the Internet era began, the Hong Kong Kwans and the overseas Kwans began to exchange e-mails in order to fill in the gaps time created when they lost contact, and relationships were renewed. As there were many members of the sixth branch living in California, Jeanne Fong (6-3-2) played a leading role in organizing a reunion of the 6th branch and members of other branches who lived nearby in 1999. More than 50 members attended the event. Based on the successful experience of this reunion, the first Kwan family reunion took place at the Asilomar Conference grounds, California from July 31 to August 3, 2003. 227 people coming from North America, Hong Kong, Singapore, China, Australia, Egypt, El Salvador, Japan, Malaysia and New Zealand attended the event. The common language of the Kwan Reunion was English. Talks and presentations were given to introduce the development of each branch. The continuation of holding a family reunion every other year, and the updating of family record book were also agreed upon by participants.¹⁵⁾

Since then, reunions took place in Hong Kong (2006), on an Alaska Cruise (2009), in Singapore (2012), on a Caribbean Cruise (2013). The next reunion is planned for August 2015.

3. Social networking and IT revolution

Kwan family members today live in an increasingly globalized world facilitated by rapidly evolving technologies that make social networking and instant communication across distance possible. A bulletin board on the family website provides members with information, serves as a communication center and display for old and new photos. With an electronic mailing list, family members can send messages to everyone instantly. A Facebook Secret Group has also been created after the Singapore Reunion to enhance closed discussion and private connections among family members.¹⁶⁾

IV. “Chineseness” of the Kwan family

The author presented a paper titled “The International Migration of a Chinese Family” based on her research of the Kwan Family, at Xiamen

University and Huaqiao University in China in September 2014. The author cited the following 3 elements as characteristics of the Kwans.

(i) Being a member of the Kwan family does not require bearing the Kwan surname, but only requires the person to be a descendant of Kwan Yuen-cheung. The spouses of daughters are also included as family members.

(ii) Kwan has become a multi-racial, multi-religious, and multi-cultural family which also accepts non-traditional values, namely, non-marital partnership and different sexual orientation such as same-sex marriage.

(iii) English has become the common language.

The audience were interested in the paper, but someone asked a thought-provoking question which was simply, “Since all three characteristics are non-Chinese elements, can the Kwan family still be considered a Chinese family?” In order to answer this question, the author sent out a survey containing 3 questions to family members by email and on Facebook, namely, (i) Do you consider yourself as Chinese, and why? (ii) How about your children? (iii) How about your spouse? Answers to the questions were received from members of different branches and regions,¹⁷⁾ and will be summarized and analyzed in the following paragraphs.

There are at least 3 types of “Chinese” recognized among the Kwans. (i) “Politically Chinese” are Chinese nationals who hold Chinese passports. The size of this group among the Kwans has been decreasing as more and more family members have migrated and gained citizenships of other countries. (ii) “Ethnically Chinese” are those who have Chinese ancestry, but do not necessarily adhere to Chinese culture and traditions. Ethnicity of some of the Kwans was diluted due to intermarriage with other ethnic groups. (iii) “Culturally Chinese” (more precisely Han-cultural Chinese) are those who retain (at least some) Chinese culture and traditions, for example, understand the Chinese language, enjoy Chinese arts, literature and music, celebrate Chinese New Year, eat Chinese food, or celebrate Christmas and Thanksgiving with turkey cooked in Chinese style, go to the family cemetery on Ching Ming, etc. However, one important point is that a cultural Chinese in the Kwan family needs not to be ethnically Chinese.

Some Chinese Kwans think that their non-Chinese spouses are more culturally Chinese than themselves, while a non-Chinese Kwan proudly claims, "We teach our children about Chinese customs and visit Family. They are also learning to speak Cantonese. I am a non-Chinese spouse and do most of the Chinese cooking in our home".¹⁸⁾ Almost all answers regard eating Chinese food as essential, whereas one insists that "understanding and speaking the Chinese language is one of the key factors" in being culturally Chinese.¹⁹⁾

As non-Chinese married into the family, and Chinese members moved to different parts of the world, non-Chinese culture and diets began to influence the family, hence, "Chineseness" has been and will be even more diluted in the future. However, Chinese culture is a hybrid and there is no single Chinese identity even within mainland China. Even Buddhism, the most important religion in China, was of foreign origin. The process might be very slow and inconspicuous, Chinese culture has assimilated other cultures historically, and procreation of Chinese with other ethnic races existed.

A few responses see themselves rather as "citizens of the world,"²⁰⁾ and suggest that being Chinese or not is irrelevant to the identification of "Kwan Family." "Many of our family dispersed across the world and have married or have established relationships with persons of other heritage, ideologies, political or social affiliations or have parents who were not born in China," hence, what matters is not how much Chinese the members are, but they are family.

As a conclusion to the above views, "Kwan Family" can be defined as a group of people who (i) have blood/ marriage/ partnership connection to Kwan Yuen-cheung, and (ii) retain the value and tradition of the family.

The final question arises, what are the values and traditions of Kwan Yuen-cheung family? Yuen-cheung's family maxim says, "May my descendants continue to be devoted Christians, and live their lives with Christian spirit to aid the poor in the community and as medical doctors to save lives or as engineers to help make the country strong." Kwan Yuen-cheung and many of his descendants were active members of the church. Some consid-

er Christianity as the greatest heritage of the family that gives the family unity.²¹⁾ Christian tradition is still strong. Sunday worship was included in the program since the first Reunion. The extended Kwan family maintained an ancestral hall in their hometown Panyu, but Kwan Yuen-cheung's descendants did not practice ancestral worship but worshipped Christ in church. Church activities were able to play a part of the role of maintaining the family network that is usually played by ancestral worship in Chinese society. Family members had many opportunities to get together because of their common religious belief, both at every Sunday service and during other major occasions such as Christmas and Easter. Marriages and funerals of family members were held in church.

Secondly, in a traditional Chinese family, a well-to-do member had the duty to provide financial assistance to other less fortunate members. In the same way, more well-to-do members in the Kwan family helped their needy relatives. King-leung (7) who practiced medicine in Hong Kong, King-sing (12) and King-sun (13) who retired in Hong Kong had built a few houses in Kowloon Tong. As the sharing of food and lodging was a family tradition, many Kwans of the same branch and others, had the experience of staying there when they fled from China owing to the Japanese invasion in 1930s or after the Communist takeover, until they were able to find a means of livelihood on their own.

Moreover, more well-to-do members gave generously toward education of the younger generation. A successful member in a big city in China or overseas would open his home to accommodate others who needed a place to stay or were starting out in their education or careers. Meda Lin (7-2-3-2) calls this the "open arms, open door tradition" and says that it has "expanded to include nieces, nephews, friends of my cousin, their children, my closest friends, and my children's friends....."²²⁾

Thirdly, Kwan family has become too vast a family to have complete consensus. There are some who are more open-minded, and some, more closed-minded and even conservative. Yet there seems to be a spirit of tolerance and acceptance of diverse values, ideologies, political views, social affiliation, and opinions on many other things.

Nationality can be changed, and ethnicity can be diluted, but the identity of one's family appears to last the longest. The study of the Kwan family as a global family helps one to perceive how far-reaching and diverse a family can become, and yet how strong the ties can bind the members together, and to better understand what role family identity serves, in today's globalized society.

Notes

- 1) This study is based on and is a continuation of my previous paper titled "The Formation of a Chinese Diaspora Family: the Case of the Guan Family", 『アジア研究シリーズ No.42』 (亜細亜大学, March, 2002) ; "The Dispersion of a Chinese Diaspora Family: The Case of the Kwan Family in America", 『アジア研究シリーズ No.51』 (亜細亜大学, 2004) and 「地域的キリスト者家族からグローバル家族への展開」 谷垣・塩出・容編著 『変容する華南と華人ネットワークの現在』 ("Transformation from Regional Christian Families to Global Families: the Case of Kwan, Yung and Cheung Families" in Tanigaki, Shiode, Yung ed. *The Morphing South China and Contemporary Chinese Networks*) (風響社, 2014), pp. 351-80.
- 2) The actual spelling of names of Yuen-cheung and his descendants, not the pinyin system, will be used in this paper. However, the pinyin will be given when names in Chinese characters first appear in the paper.
- 3) For the history of the first and second generations of Kwan Yuen-cheung family, refer to 容應莢「香港開埠與關家」(The Opening of Hong Kong Port and the Kwan Family), in 關肇碩, 容應莢『香港開埠與關家』(香港: 廣角鏡出版社, 1997), pp. 5-30.
- 4) Yung Ying-yue, "The Dispersion of a Chinese Diaspora Family: The Case of the Kwan Family in America", p. 11.
- 5) Information given by Roger Lee (5-1-1-1-2).
- 6) This unpublished family record has been updated from the 2003 Family Record by, and is kept by the author. The number is counted on April 1, 2015.
- 7) Information regarding the in-laws of the Kwan Family is based on interviews performed by the author with Kwan family members.
- 8) Information regarding the migration of the Kwan family members is based on oral interviews and interviews via mails performed by the author.
- 9) The 1937 family record has two volumes. The first volume 『關氏家譜』 records the ancestors from Guan Zhaoye (關肇治) of the first generation to Kwan Yuen-cheung of the 18th generation. The second volume 『元昌公家譜』 records the descendants of Kwan Yuen-cheung. Printed by 香港商業印刷所.
- 10) Peter Kwan, *The Kwan Family Record of Genealogy* (Unpublished article, dis-

tributed privately to family members, 1982).

- 11) Yung Chi-tung ed. 『容清裕堂家譜』 (*The Yung Qing Yu Tang Family Record*) (Hong Kong: no publisher, 1982).
- 12) Richard Yung ed. 『容清裕堂家譜』 (*The Yung Qing Yu Tang Family Record*), 2nd Edition (Hong Kong: no publisher, 1999).
- 13) 關肇碩·容應堯『香港開埠與關家』 (香港: 廣角鏡出版社, 1997). (Kwan, S.S. & Yung Ying-yue, *The Opening of Hong Kong Port and the Kwan Family*).
- 14) Kwan Yuen-cheong *Family Record*, (Unpublished article, distributed privately to family members, 2003).
- 15) Yung Ying-yue, "The Dispersion of a Chinese Diaspora Family: The Case of the Kwan Family in America", p. 20.
- 16) Yung Ying-yue "Transformation from Regional Christian Families to Global Families: the Case of Kwan, Yung and Cheung families" in *The Morphing South China and Contemporary Chinese Networks*, pp. 377-8.
- 17) As of March 31, the author has received 4 replies from the 2nd branch, 5 replies from the 7th branch, 2 replies from the 8th branch, 3 replies from the 9th branch, and 1 from the 12th branch.
- 18) Reply from 2-10-2-1S.
- 19) Reply from 8-4-2-1.
- 20) For example, reply from 7-2-3-2.
- 21) Reply from 2-10-1S. But some variety may be seen among the younger members, and a Muslim name (7-2-8-2) is even found in the Family.
- 22) Reply from 7-2-3-2.